(c) The Ministry of Agriculture is providing subsidy through National Oilseeds and Vegetable Oils Development (NOVOD) Board to the farmers, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), individuals etc. for production of Tree Borne Oilseeds (TBOs), including bio-fuel crops, under the Integrated Development of Tree Borne Oilseeds Scheme. Under this scheme, 30% credit linked subsidy is being provided, which is linked with 50% term loan to be taken from bank, and 20% beneficiary share in the form of land, labour etc. Further, the Ministry of Rural Development has provided financial assistance to the tune of Rs. 49.00 crore to 9 identified States in 2005-06 and Rs. 49.50 crore to 15 States in 2006-07 for the purpose of raising jatropha/pongamia seedlings and plantation of the same under the ongoing States/Central Sector area development programmes.

Solar water heaters

1787. DR. ABHISHEK MANU SINGHVI: Will the Minister of NEW AND RENEWABLE ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) the efforts made by Government to implement the use of solar water heaters for domestic use as this is very essential because major parts of the country are facing a power crisis; and

(b) whether there are some schemes available in this regard and if so, how many such subsidized solar water heaters have been provided or installed, so far?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF NEW AND RENEWABLE ENERGY (SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR): (a) and (b) Efforts made to promote the use of solar water heaters in the country include financial assistance through capital or interest subsidy; promotional measures by State Governments such as amendment of building bye-laws, rebate in property tax, electricity bills; and, publicity and awareness campaigns. Under the scheme on accelerated development and deployment of solar water heaters being implemented through banks and financial institutions, upfront interest subsidy is available for soft loans to different categories of users. Loans to domestic users are available at an effective interest rate of 2%, 28 banks and financial institutions are participating in the scheme.

Over 21 lakh sq. m. of collector area has so far been installed for solar water heaters in the country. Apart from installation in institutional buildings, industry and commercial establishments, about 7.5 lakh homes are estimated to have been covered including installations under the interest subsidy scheme.

Funds for solar energy in Assam

1788. KUMAR DEEPAK DAS: Will the Minister of NEW AND RENEWABLE ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government has any proposal for allocating funds to popularise solar energy in Assam;

(b) whether Government would consider special schemes of solar energy system in the remote village areas like Chhar area in North-Eastern Region;

(c) What is the perspective planning for setting up of such power plants of renewable energy in Assam during the Eleventh Five Year Plan; and

(d) whether districts like Barpeta, Goalpara and Majuli would get such a plan?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF NEW AND RENEWABLE ENERGY (SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR): (a) to (d) The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy is implementing several programmes to promote use of solar energy devices and systems in the country including Assam. The programmes are the Solar Photovoltaic Programme, Solar Photovoltaic Water Pumping Programme, Solar Lantern Programme, and Solar Thermal Energy Programme. On the basis of proposals received from the States agencies and the availability of funds the Ministry allocates targets to them.

In addition, under the remote Village Electrification programme unelectrified census villages are electrified through renewable energy systems or provided solar lighting, the proposals for which are considered by the Ministry on case to case basis.

During 2007-08 a total of 750 solar home lighting systems, 50 solar street lighting systems and 500 solar lanterns have been allocated to the State of Assam. In addition projects have also been sanctioned for electrification/lighting of 555 villages through solar energy systems.

There is no proposal to formulate any special scheme to provide solar energy systems in the remote villages of Assam. 2139 villages in Assam including those in Chhar areas have been identified by the State for coverage through renewable energy sources, including solar energy systems. No proposal has been received from the State for setting up renewable energy power plants in the districts of Barpetta, Goalpara and Majuli.

The Ministry does not prepare State-wise plans for setting up of solar energy systems in different States. The States submit proposals to the Ministry on the basis of the plans prepared by them.

Research and generation of solar energy

1789. PROF. P.J. KURIEN: Will the Minister of NEW AND RENEWABLE ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) the total generation of solar energy in the country;

(b) the steps Government has taken to improve the generation and reduce the cost of generation;

(c) whether any incentive is given to private agencies for research and generation of solar energy; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF NEW AND RENEWABLE ENERGY (SHRI VILAS MUTTEMWAR): (a) A total of 33 grid interactive solar photovoltaic power plants have been installed in the country with financial support from the Government. These plants, with aggregate capacity of 2.12 Megawatt, are estimated to generate about 2.55 million units of electricity in a year. In addition, around 14.5 lakh decentralized off-grid solar photovoltaic systems aggregating about 125 Megawatt capacity have been installed in the country, which is capable of generating about 150 million units in a year. Further, a collector area of about 2.15 million square meter has been installed for solar water heating applications. The amount of energy generation depends on the use pattern of the system and climate of the place. Typically, a solar water heating system with 2 square meter of